

Bill Myers was born 81 years ago in Greenville, North Carolina. From a very early age, Bill showed great musical ability. This talent prompted Bill's grandmother to enroll him in piano to develop his skills.

Over the years, Bill continued his quest for musical excellence, joining the high school band, while also playing piano for church Sunday school.

Recognizing his gift, Bill's Sunday school teacher took him to New York City to attend a convention. During the trip, Bill visited Radio City Music Hall, saw the Rockettes perform, went to the Apollo Theater, and saw Willis "Gator Tail" Jackson perform his saxophone. That performance proved to be life-changing and served as Bill's inspiration to pursue the saxophone.

Not long after the New York trip, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bob Lewis was hired as the school's new band director. Bill idolized Bob Lewis. Everything he did impressed Bill, from his style of dress to his shined shoes, and Bob played the saxophone.

It was the tremendous influence of Bob Lewis and his piano teacher, Ms. Albright—both graduates of Virginia State University—that prompted Bill to attend that institution.

Since Bill didn't have the resources to attend college, he began performing his musical talents. He joined bands in Greenville that played at the Tropicana Club, the Blue Moon Club, and the Red Rose Club. Eventually, Bill was able to save enough money to attend Virginia State University, where he majored in music and mastered the saxophone.

In 1955, Bill graduated from Virginia State University and joined the United States Army as a second lieutenant.

After his military service, Bill's father arranged an interview for him to teach at Frederick Douglass High School in Elm City, North Carolina. The school needed a new music teacher, and Bill was a perfect fit.

As a teacher, Bill was really disheartened by the students' lack of cultural exposure, so Bill made sure to expose them to the arts and other communities and to opportunities beyond their town.

Due to his work and commitment, Bill was eventually promoted to assistant principal before deciding to pursue a master's in education at East Carolina University.

After completing graduate school, Bill attended the Principal's Executive Program at the University of North Carolina, which led to him being named principal of the newly-integrated Elm City High School.

After the county's school systems merged, Bill became principal of Elm City Middle School and eventually became assistant superintendent of schools for personnel, becoming the first African American in the county to hold that position.

Throughout the course of his long life, Bill still manages to perform with his band of 60 years called The Mon-

itors. The band often boasts that Roberta Flack was its first vocalist.

I would be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I did not mention Bill's wife, the former Diana Davis—yes, my first cousin—the love of his life for 51 years. The two were married in 1963. I remember it so well. I was their wedding driver.

They have two wonderful children, Michael Earl and Michelle Earlisa; and they have, together, four grandchildren—William, Madison, Cameron, and Mikayla.

Bill is a devout member of the St. John AME Zion Church in Wilson, where he leads its powerful gospel choir.

Mr. Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues to join me in offering our heartfelt congratulations to a great North Carolinian, to a great American, Mr. William Earl "Bill" Myers.

THE MODERN CURES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise as a proud cosponsor of H.R. 3116, the MODERN Cures Act.

As most know, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a progressive, fatal neuromuscular disorder that causes the loss of voluntary muscle control, often resulting in paralysis.

As a former rehabilitation therapist and manager, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating impact that this disease takes of individual lives and family members.

The life expectancy after a diagnosis with ALS is an average of 2 to 5 years. Veterans are twice as likely to experience and to die from ALS as the general public. What is even worse, Mr. Speaker, is there remains no cure.

The MODERN Cures Act would speed up the development of new and better treatments for patients with chronic diseases and disabilities, including ALS, by removing barriers to medical innovation.

The legislation encourages research on treatments which, quite frankly, have been set aside in the lab, but hold promise for treating ALS and other chronic diseases and disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, last week, Tom Donahue, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce said that if House Republicans fail to pass an immigration bill this year, the Republican Party should "not bother to run a candidate in 2016."

Even with a majority of Republican voters supporting immigration re-

form—and yes, a majority of Tea Party voters in support—the positions Republican candidates feel they must take in order to win over their base make them unelectable when they face the American people in the general election.

Latino voters are repelled, and the loud but small contingent of immigration opponents have backed the Republican Party into a corner that they don't have the courage to break out of.

So, Mr. Speaker, I give you George W. Bush, the man who will go down history as the last Republican President in American history.

Tom Donahue is right. There is a demographic reality that will make Republicans a footnote in history, just like the Whigs and the Know-Nothings, unless they do something to get the immigration issue off the table.

Look, there are only 18 legislative days before the July 4 recess, before the campaign season takes over, but you still have time to change history.

If you do nothing on immigration, I guess you can take comfort in knowing that, from Abraham Lincoln to George W. Bush, you had a pretty good run. Freeing the slaves, winning the Civil War, interstate highway system, those all go in the highlight column; and there have been a few lowlights as well.

All our grandchildren will ever know of Republicans as a national party will be what they read in the history blogs, and they will look at 2014 as the year it all slipped away, unless you act soon.

With or without immigration reform, Latino voters are a force that is growing faster than Republicans can withstand and are tilting more towards the Democrats with each day Republicans stand in the way of stopping deportations that are breaking up immigrant families.

Today, Tuesday, 2,000 Latino citizens born and raised in the United States—right here in the United States of America—will turn 18 and become eligible to vote. That is 2,000 today and every day until Election Day 2016.

But wait a minute. That will continue for the next 30 years. That is 65,000 citizens a month, with or without immigration reform for the next 30 years.

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Throw in women, younger voters, Asian voters, and others who are strongly in favor of immigration reform, and the Republican Party has dug quite a hole for themselves by standing with STEVE KING of Iowa.

Two million more Latinos voted in 2008 than in 2004 and tilted heavily to the Democrats after the Sensenbrenner bill, a Republican enforcement-only bill that criminalized immigrant families. Two million more Latinos voted in 2012 than in 2008 and tilted even farther to my side because of Romney's anti-immigrant message. And we aren't even registering the citizens in our community in the numbers we are capable of, but we are getting better at it with every passing year.